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ABSTRACT

Administrators from 32 public two-year community colleges were surveyed to reveal the extent to which Management by Objectives (MBO) programs affected organizational conditions; 200 questionnaires (71%) were returned. Approximately 65% of the administrators indicated that the MBO system did not change the amount of formal contact between superior and subordinate, though the administrators were generally pleased with the amount of change. In response to whether superiors encouraged suggestions during joint goal-setting meetings, 83% indicated that suggestions were encouraged. A slight majority perceived an increase in the amount of job responsibility following joint goal-setting meetings with their superiors. Similarly, 57% perceived an increased role in decisions within the administrative unit. Though a slight majority (54%) indicated that MBO had contributed positively to communication within administrative units, negative effects on administrative communication were identified in relation to communications across division lines. The following conclusions were drawn: (1) MBO programs can increase formal contacts between superior and subordinate; (2) they encourage suggestions from subordinates and are likely to result in a higher percentage of suggestions being accepted by superiors; and (3) MBO can clarify the responsibility of the administrator and increase feelings of taking a greater part in decision making. (MB)

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ATTITUDES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS TOWARD MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES

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ATTITUDES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS
TOWARD MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Management-by-Objectives (MBO) has provided considerable comment and research in recent years. During the 1960's the concept of MBO generated much interest and research in industrial organization.

The proponents of the concept include Drucker, McGregor, Humble, Ordiorne and others, who agree that a properly implemented MBO system should improve the motivation, communication, planning, job responsibilities and participation of organization members.

Management-by-Objectives is a process where members of an organization define the goals of the organization involving the participation of each individual's major areas of responsibility in terms of results expected.

Management-by-Objectives is an outgrowth of a recent trend toward more participation by each person that has equity in the organization. The strength of the system is in the areas of planning, participation, evaluation and communication.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The organization selected for this study was public two-year community colleges. The study was designed to examine both negative and positive attitudes toward a Management-by-Objectives system, as perceived by public two-year community college administrators.

The study was conducted within the following major administrative units of the community college: Administrative Affairs

Unit, Community Services Unit, Instructional Affairs Unit, Student Services Unit, Research and Development Unit, and Community College Presidents.

The Administrative Affairs Unit is engaged in financial records, bookstore, purchasing, and food operations.

Community Services Unit is responsible for cultural activities, evening and weekend programs, and community activities.

The Instructional Affairs Unit is responsible for instruction in credit programs, library, audio-visual development, and learning laboratory materials.

The Student Services Unit is responsible for admissions and registration, counseling, financial aids, placement, student activities, health, and housing.

Research and Development is a unit responsible for planning, conducting and coordinating research activities, assisting in developing proposals for funding of projects, and disseminating research information for the instruction unit.

Specifically, Community College Presidents are the chief executives reporting to the board of trustees.

Data for the study were collected entirely through a confidential questionnaire consisting of open-end questions and scaled items using bi-polar adjectives. Scaled items were designed to reveal the extent to which the MBO system was responsible for affecting selected organizational conditions.

Administrators from a total of 32 public two-year community colleges that were operating under an MBO system indicated a willingness to participate in the study.

A total of 200 instruments (71 percent) were returned. As shown by the data in Table 1, the Instructional Affairs Unit had the largest number of respondents with 72, and community college presidents was represented by the smallest number of respondents with 13.

TABLE 1.--RESPONSES FROM ALL ADMINSTRATIVE UNITS

Administrative Units	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Administrative Affairs Unit	33	16.5
Community Services Unit	29	14.5
Instructional Affairs Unit	72	36.0
Student Services Unit	38	19.0
Research and Development Unit	15	7.5
Community College Presidents	13	6.5
TOTAL	200	100.0

ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES SYSTEM

The community college administrators were asked to rate items on the effect of the MBO system on formal contacts, and the extent to which the superior and subordinate contributed or were encouraged to contribute to the objective-setting conference.

The MBO program had a minimal effect on formal contacts between superior and subordinate. Approximately 65 percent of the administrators indicated the effect of the MBO system did not change the amount of formal contact between the superior and subordinate. Fifty-one of 25.2 percent of the respondents commented that superior-subordinate formal contacts had increased as a result of the MBO program. Only 10.1 percent of the administrators indicated that MBO had a decreasing effect on formal contacts.

Administrators were asked to respond to the degree of satisfaction with the amount of change in formal contacts as a result of MBO. The administrators were generally pleased with the amount of change in formal contacts as a result of the MBO program. A positive average response of 3.4 was noted for the organization as a whole. An average response of 3.5 for the administrative affairs unit and community college presidents was the highest of the six units. The research and development unit had the lowest average response rate with 3.1 (see Table 2 and 3).

Respondents were asked whether or not superiors encourage suggestions during joint goal-setting meetings. A comparison of the responses by administrators from each of the six units were reported in Table 4. One hundred and sixty-six administrators, or 83.4 percent, indicated that suggestions were encouraged by responding with either a four or five point scale. The average response also indicated that suggestions were encouraged during joint goal-setting meetings, with an overall response average of 4.2.

TABLE 2.--EFFECT OF MBO ON FORMAL CONTACTS BETWEEN SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

Administrative Units	Interval					Total Responses	Average Responses
	Greatly Decreased 1	2	3	4	Greatly Increased 5		
Administrative Affairs Unit	2	2	20	6	3	33	3.2
Community Services Unit	1	1	24	3	0	29	3.0
Instructional Affairs Unit	3	5	44	17	2	71	3.1
Student Services Unit	0	4	25	7	1	37	3.1
Research and Development Unit	0	1	9	4	1	15	3.3
Community College Presidents	0	1	6	5	1	13	3.5
Total Number Responses	6	14	128	42	9	198	3.2
Percent of Totals	3.0	7.1	64.6	21.2	4.0	100	

TABLE 3.--DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE AMOUNT OF FORMAL CONTACTS BETWEEN SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE

Administrative Units	Interval: Very Displeased 1	2	3	4	Very Pleased 5	Total Responses	Average Responses
Administrative Affairs Unit	2	2	12	12	5	33	3.5
Community Services Unit	0	4	13	10	2	29	3.3
Instructional Affairs Unit	4	7	31	20	9	71	3.3
Student Services Unit	1	2	21	7	6	37	3.4
Research and Development Unit	2	0	8	4	1	15	3.1
Community College Presidents	0	2	4	5	2	13	3.5
Total Number Responses	9	17	89	58	25	198	3.4
Percent of Totals	4.5	8.6	44.9	29.3	12.6	100	

EFFECTS OF MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES ON SELECTED VARIABLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

In addition to investigating the installation aspects of MBO program, the study attempted to determine how the program affected behavior and attitudinal patterns of the community college administrators. In particular, administrator perceptions were examined concerning the system's effect on changes in job responsibility, participation in decision-making, and attitudes toward the MBO system, itself.

A slight majority of the administrators perceived an increase in the amount of job responsibility following joint goal-setting meetings with the superior. The data in Table 5 shows that 54 percent of the respondents reported an increase in responsibility following the MBO meetings. However, 43 percent declared no change in the amount of responsibility subsequent to the MBO meetings.

The overall satisfaction from the administrators concerning the change in responsibilities was generally positive. Greater responsibility had favorable reaction from 60 percent of the respondents as shown in Table 6. No change in satisfaction with job responsibilities was recorded for 31.5 percent of the persons responding and 8.5 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the change in job responsibilities as a result of MBO meetings.

To ascertain the perceived extent to which MBO affected decision-making in community colleges, a series of questions were asked to determine the extent that administrators were removed from decision-making

Table 7 indicates responses to the perceived effect of MBO program upon decision-making within the administrative unit. The data shows that 57.3 percent of the administrators perceived an increased role in decisions, while 37.2 percent reported no change in the participation level. The average response across all six unit classifications was 3.7 on the five point scale.

TABLE 4.--ENCOURAGEMENT BY THE SUPERIOR OF SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES FROM THE SUBORDINATE DURING JOINT GOAL-SETTING MEETINGS

Administrative Units	Interval: My suggestions are discouraged 1	2	3	4	My suggestions are encouraged 5	Total Responses	Average Responses
Administrative Affairs Unit	1	0	3	14	14	32	4.3
Community Services Unit	1	1	2	10	15	29	4.3
Instructional Affairs Unit	2	3	9	26	32	72	4.2
Student Services Unit	0	0	6	18	14	38	4.2
Research and Development Unit	0	2	2	6	5	15	3.9
Community College Presidents	0	1	0	5	7	13	4.4
Total Number Responding	4	7	22	79	87	199	4.2
Percent of Totals	2.0	3.5	11.1	39.7	43.7	100	

TABLE 5.--EFFECT OF MBO MEETINGS ON CHANGE IN THE AMOUNT OF JOB RESPONSIBILITY

Administrative Units	Much less Responsibility	Interval	No Change		Much More Responsibility	Total Responses	Average Responses
	1	2	3	4	5		
Administrative Affairs Unit	0	0	18	10	5	33	3.6
Community Services Unit	0	1	7	17	4	29	3.8
Instructional Affairs Unit	2	0	32	24	14	72	3.7
Student Services Unit	0	1	20	13	4	38	3.5
Research and Development Unit	0	1	5	9	0	15	3.5
Community College Presidents	0	1	4	5	3	13	3.8
Total Number Responses	2	4	86	78	30	200	3.7
Percent of Totals	1.0	2.0	43.0	39.0	15.0	100	

TABLE 6.--DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE CHANGE IN JOB RESPONSIBILITY AS A RESULT OF MBO MEETINGS

Administrative Units	Interval					Total Responses	Average Responses
	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Very Satisfied 5		
Administrative Affairs Unit	3	1	10	11	8	33	3.6
Community Services Unit	1	2	7	16	3	29	3.6
Instructional Affairs Unit	5	3	22	25	17	72	3.6
Student Services Unit	0	0	15	18	5	38	3.7
Research and Development Unit	1	0	5	8	1	15	3.5
Community College Presidents	0	1	4	4	4	13	3.8
Total Number Responses	10	7	63	82	38	200	3.7
Percent of Totals	5.0	3.5	31.5	41.0	19.0	100	

TABLE 7.--ATTITUDES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS TOWARD BEING "IN ON" OR "REMOVED FROM" DECISIONS AS A RESULT OF MBO

Administrative Unit	Interval: Feel more Removed From Decision 1	2	No Change 3	4	Feel more a Part of Decision 5	Total Responses	Average Responses
Administrative Affairs Unit	0	0	14	17	1	32	3.6
Community Services Unit	1	0	12	12	4	29	3.6
Instructional Affairs Unit	2	4	20	28	18	72	3.8
Student Services Unit	0	2	17	13	6	38	3.6
Research and Development Unit	1	1	7	4	2	15	3.3
Community College Presidents	0	0	4	4	5	13	4.1
Total Number Responses	4	7	74	78	36	199	3.7
Percent of Totals	2.0	3.5	37.2	39.2	18.1	100	

Responses shown in Table 8 demonstrate what administrators perceived to be the contribution of the MBO program to communication within the administrative unit. A slight majority represented by 54 percent of the responding administrators indicated that the MBO program had contributed positively to communication in the administrative unit. Administrators in the administrative affairs unit and student services unit were less positive about contributions of the MBO program than were the personnel in the other four units.

As an open-end item, administrators were asked to describe how MBO had contributed positively or negatively to communication in the administrative unit. Thirty-five percent of the administrators indicated that MBO had not affected communication in the administrative unit. However, 55 percent did record that MBO generally had a positive effect on communications. Ten percent gave no response. From the descriptive replies, respondents perceived generally that MBO strengthened the means of the administrative unit to perform face-to-face communication. Comments also suggested that MBO had increased the commitment of the organization to objectives which reqired communication and understanding.

Other statements from respondents described the MBO program as serving to increase the clarity and relevancy of communication within the administrative unit.

The negative aspects of the MBO program on communication were generally related to communications across division lines. Comments signified that administrators established objectives in the unit but failed to communicate with peers. For instance, one administrator

TABLE 8. --CONTRIBUTION OF THE MBO PROGRAM TO COMMUNICATION IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

Administrative Units	Interval: Negatively 1	2	Not Noticeable 3	4	Positively 5	Total Responses	Average Responses
Administrative Affairs Unit	2	1	11	16	3	33	3.5
Community Services Unit	0	0	11	17	1	29	3.7
Instructional Affairs Unit	2	1	31	21	17	72	3.7
Student Services Unit	1	0	20	16	1	38	3.4
Research and Development Unit	0	0	8	4	3	15	3.7
Community College Presidents	0	1	3	4	5	13	4.0
Total Number Responses	5	3	84	78	30	200	3.6
Percent of Totals	2.5	1.5	42.0	39.0	15.0	100	

declared, "Communication level is vastly improved within the unit only." Another administrator said, "Communication with supervisor is excellent, but with other departments minimal."

The attitudes of the community college administrator toward the MBO program were generally favorable as shown by the data summarized in Table 9. Only eight percent of the administrators responding signified an unfavorable view of MBO, while a total of 72.5 percent of the administrators indicating a very favorable attitude. The remaining 19.5 percent were neutral. Average response figures for each administrative unit revealed that only slight differences between units regarding administrative attitudes toward MBO.

DETERMINING PREDICTORS

To determine the significant predictors for the attitudes of the community college administrator twoard MBO, a stepwise multiple-regression analysis of variance technique was employed. The predictor variables were listed in Table 2 in the order of importance of contribution. The four variables were highly significant predictors at the .01 level or above. The single best predictor of the attitudes of the administrator toward MBO was MBO as an effective way of planning and organizing the work for which an administrator was accountable. The second significant predictor was the use of MBO as an effective way of evaluating work performance. The third significant predictor was the degree of satisfaction with being in on decisions in the administrative unit. The last factor which ranked as a significant predictor of attitudes toward MBO was the subordinate perceptions of the attitudes of the superior toward the MBO system.

TABLE 9.--ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS TOWARD THE MBO PROGRAM

Administrative Units	Interval					Total Responses	Average Responses
	Very Unfavorable 1	2	3	4	Very Favorable 5		
Administrative Affairs Unit	2	1	9	14	8	33	3.8
Community Services Unit	0	2	4	16	7	29	3.9
Instructional Affairs Unit	5	3	15	22	27	72	3.9
Student Services Unit	1	1	8	17	11	39	4.0
Research and Development Unit	0	0	2	7	6	15	4.3
Community College Presidents	0	1	2	4	6	13	4.2
Total Number Responses	8	8	39	80	65	200	4.0
Percent of Totals	4.0	4.0	19.5	40.0	32.5	100	

Table 10.--Stepwise Multiple-Regression Analysis of Selected Variables Using the Attitudes of the Administrator Toward MBO as the Dependent Variable.

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	F
Regression	4	109.34361	27.33590	62.56707**
Planning and Organizing Work	1	87.33590		
Evaluation of Work Performance	1	11.17810		
Satisfaction with Being In on Decisions	1	7.48099		
Subordinate Perceptions of the Attitudes of the Superior Toward the MBO Program	1	3.17764		
Residual	188	82.13825	0.43691	

**F_{99} (4,188) = 3.32

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions applicable to public two-year community colleges which are similar in characteristics of the sample institutions were drawn from the findings:

1. Management-by-Objectives programs can be expected to increase slightly formal contacts between superior and subordinate.
2. Management-by-Objectives programs encourage suggestions from subordinates and are likely to result in higher degree of the suggestions being accepted.
3. Management-by-Objectives programs applied in public two-year community colleges are likely to increase and clarify the responsibility of the administrator.
4. Management-by-Objectives programs applied in public two-year community colleges are likely to increase the feeling by administrators of being more a part of decision-making.
5. Management-by-Objectives program applied in public two-year community colleges are likely to result in the superior accepting the ideas and suggestions of the subordinate throughtout the year.
6. Management-by-Objectives applied to public two-year community colleges generally can be expected to contribute positively to communication within established channels of communications, but communication across dévision or department lines will need special

attention to avoid the development of negative attitudes by administrators.

7. Favorable attitudes toward the Management-by-Objectives program for public two-year community college adminstrators can be a generally accepted expectation.

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